

# NUPOC NEWS

*The official newsletter of the  
Northwestern University Prosthetics-Orthotics Center*



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## Education for Future Generations

Over the summer, we were delighted to host the National Student Leadership Conference's biotechnology students. This group comprised high school-aged students from all over the country, united by their passion for healthcare and sciences. As part of their summer intensive program, the students were given the opportunity to explore both of Northwestern's campuses and familiarize themselves with the various health-related disciplines offered by the university. While at NUPOC, the students had the opportunity to interact with our current MPO students, learn about our curriculum, and participate in interactive demonstrations led by our exceptional faculty and staff. We thoroughly enjoyed educating the students and hope they will be inspired to explore a future career in prosthetics and orthotics.

## Faculty & Staff Update

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Russell Johnson has officially joined the NUPOC research team! Dr. Johnson received a BS in Applied Exercise Science from Springfield College, and a MS and PhD in Kinesiology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. His graduate research work focused on understanding the relationship between the mechanics and energetics of locomotion. For his dissertation, he compared the gait mechanics of humans and chimpanzees to study how lower limb morphology can impact preferred bipedal gait mechanics. Following his PhD, he was a post-doctoral scholar at the University of Southern California in Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy. During this time, he studied the impact that post-stroke impairments have on gait function through the use of musculoskeletal modeling and simulation. He is excited to have joined NUPOC, and is looking forward to continuing to study ways to improve mobility for individuals who use orthoses or prostheses.



PICTURED: RUSSELL JOHNSON, PhD

We're also pleased to welcome Kiley Armstrong to our research team! Kiley received her master's in biomedical engineering from Case Western Reserve University in 2017, followed by her Master of Orthotics and Prosthetics from NUPOC in 2019. After completing her orthotics residency at the University of Michigan and her prosthetics residency at UCSF, she practiced as a CPO in Denver, CO. Kiley first learned about the field after joining her high school's Women in Medicine program. While in the program, she shadowed various medical professionals, and spent a day at an O&P clinic. After meeting patients and observing the hands-on work in the lab, she knew she wanted a career in the field. Kiley serves as the co-chair of AAOP's Gait Society, where she is working to create a community of like-minded individuals passionate about gait analysis, gait training, and O&P care outcomes. She also serves as the co-chair of AAOP's Collaborative on Inclusive Action and Engagement, working to create a safe and inclusive environment for all individuals in O&P. She's passionate about improving the accessibility of sport and movement, and she is currently focusing her efforts on yoga and soccer.



PICTURED: KILEY ARMSTRONG, MS, MPO, CPO

# Student Achievements

Three of our MPO '23 students won first place in the Orthotic and Prosthetic Foundation for Education and Research 2023 ABC Poster Awards! Congratulations to Madison Nastruz, MPO, Kristen John, MPO and Ross Kelly, MPO. To learn more about their project titled “*The Effects of Prosthesis Mechanical Properties on Balance in Unilateral Transtibial Prosthesis Users: A Literature Review*”, click [here](#).



PICTURED: KRISTEN JOHN, MADISON NASTRUZ, ROSS KELLY

Second-year NUPOC student Abby Citterman traveled to Sydney, Australia to present her research at the International Conference of the IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society (EMBS), the largest international society of biomedical engineers. The IEEE Engineering Medicine & Biology Conference is a highly regarded international event that brings together researchers, engineers, and scientists to present and discuss groundbreaking advancements within the fields of engineering, medicine, and biology. It serves as a platform for showcasing cutting-edge research, fostering collaboration, and stimulating progress in various healthcare technologies and applications. It is with great we share that Abby was awarded 3rd place for the quality of her research paper and oral presentation. She is grateful for the opportunity, honored by this significant recognition, and more eager than ever to continue working at the intersection of research and clinical care. This year's conference theme was *Engineering Better and More Resilient Healthcare for All*. She explored a new method of using non-invasive electrical stimulation to assess sensory impairment for individuals who experienced stroke. You can read her paper by clicking [here](#).



PICTURED: ABBY CITTERMAN, MPO'24



# Alumni Spotlight

Our first alumni spotlight features Haris Kafedzic, a passionate and dedicated Certified Prosthetist Orthotist (CPO).

Haris's interest in O&P was sparked by his family member's above-the-knee amputation. He pursued his Master's in Prosthetics and Orthotics (MPO) at Northwestern and graduated in 2015. Haris's career began at Eschen Prosthetics and Orthotics Lab in Manhattan, where he now serves as a facility manager and head prosthetist. When reflecting on his journey, Haris credits John Brinkman and Christopher Robinson, both esteemed NUPOC mentors, for their guidance and professional advice.

Haris's advice to aspiring professionals is to be passionate and empathetic towards patients. He emphasizes that some of his most valuable insights were learned from his patients, and asserts that with genuine care and effort, success is attainable.

We are grateful for Haris's contributions to the field and extend our best wishes for his continued success!



PICTURED:MR. & MRS. HARIS KAFEDZIC

***“Work hard, stay late,  
and never stop  
learning!”-Haris  
Kafedzic, MPO, CPO***

# Give Back this Holiday Season

We're thrilled to announce that in January, we'll be hosting our inaugural white coat ceremony to celebrate our students' accomplishment in becoming certified prosthetists-orthotists. As we approach this holiday season, we invite you to participate in this momentous occasion by sponsoring a white coat for one of our students. In doing so, you'll be highlighting the commitment, generosity, and community spirit we value so highly at Northwestern University.

To learn more about our fundraiser or make a donation, click [here](#). In addition to sponsoring a white coat, there are other ways to show your support. Contributions can be made online or by contacting FSM Development at (T: 312-503-2706).

We're incredibly grateful for your generosity and support.



# Follow us on Social Media!

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